

# The Library Assistant :

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

### MAY GENERAL MEETING.

The May Meeting will be held on the **14th inst.**, at the **Public Library, 35, Hill Road, Wimbledon.** Mr. Henry Wm. Bull, Borough Librarian, has very kindly promised to arrange a two hours' ramble over the Common in the afternoon, and those proposing to take part are asked to **meet at the Library at 4 p.m. sharp.** At the conclusion of the ramble Mr. Bull will entertain the members to tea at Johnston's Rooms, 6, The Broadway, opposite the railway station, south side. The business meeting will commence at 7.30 p.m., prior to which opportunity will be given for an inspection of the Library. Mr. Bull will occupy the chair, and the two following papers will be read:—

**"THE LIBRARY SCHOOLS OF AMERICA AND THEIR WORK."**

By Miss Dorothy Ballen, London School of Economics.

**"THE LIBRARY SCHOOLS OF THE CONTINENT AND THEIR WORK."** By Miss O. Mühlenfeld, Hilversum, Holland.

Given fine weather this meeting will prove one of the most enjoyable of the present session; Mr. Bull has entered enthusiastically into the arrangements, and the Council hopes there will be a good response to his generous invitation.

The Library is situated about one hundred yards north of the railway station on the main road. The L. and S.W. from Waterloo, the L.B. & S.C. from Croydon, and the

District from any part of London in connection with the Tubes all go to Wimbledon. Those travelling by the District should *not* alight at *Wimbledon Park*, but continue to Wimbledon, which is the terminus.

### ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COUNCIL.

Nominations for Officers and Council, consisting of President, Vice-President (who must be a Provincial member), Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary, two Fellows, ten London Councillors (Members or Associates), and ten Non-London Councillors (Members or Associates), should reach the undersigned not later than May 6th.

W. C. BERWICK SAYERS,

HONORARY SECRETARY,  
CENTRAL LIBRARY, TOWN HALL,  
CROYDON.

### MIDLAND BRANCH—ANNUAL OPEN MEETING.

THE ANNUAL OPEN MEETING of the Midland Branch will be held at Leamington, on Thursday, May 29th. Mr. W. Ewart Owen, librarian, has very kindly arranged the following attractive programme :—

Walk across the fields to Guy's Cliff, where Lord Algernon Percy has kindly granted permission to go over the grounds and chapel.

Visit the Gaveston Monument (time permitting).

Take tea at the Royal Pump Rooms, by kind invitation of His Worship the Mayor (Councillor W. W. Donald).

Proceed to the Library, where Mr. Grace, sub-librarian, will read a paper.

Attend concert in the gardens, for which a charge of threepence per person will be made.

All who hope to be present are requested to inform the undersigned not later than May 17th, stating, if not Birmingham members, their time of arrival at Leamington, which should be as early as possible in the afternoon. Birmingham members travel by Great Western Railway excursion, particulars of which will be issued later.

F. J. PATRICK, *Hon. Sec.* MIDLAND BRANCH.

### SOUTH COAST BRANCH.

#### ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE.

Nominations for Officers and Committee for the ensuing year should be sent to the Hon. Secretary not later than the 31st May.

A. CECIL PIPER, *Hon. Secretary*,  
Public Library, Brighton.

### NORTH EASTERN BRANCH.

ESSAY COMPETITION : The Committee of the above Branch have decided to offer two prizes, value £1 and 10s. respectively, for the two best Essays sent in by Associates on "The possibilities of Library Development

should the Bill now before Parliament become law," length not to exceed 2,500 words. Entries should be sent in to the Secretary, Mr. R. M. Daniel, not later than May 27th. Full particulars will be sent to each entrant. Open only to Associates of the North Eastern Branch.

#### EASTER SCHOOL, HOLLAND.—PHOTOGRAPH.

The photograph of the Easter School taken at the Utrecht Public Library can now be obtained from the Honorary Secretary (W. C. Berwick Sayers, Central Library, Town Hall, Croydon). The cost is 2s. 8d. post free. Applications, with remittance, should be sent by May 10th, as only copies for those who apply will be obtained from the photographer. The group, as members will remember, is an excellent one.

#### EDITORIAL.

**The Council Election and the Annual Meeting.**—Our readers are reminded that the time for the election of a new Council draws near. In order to guard against the possibility of members being precluded from voting by reason of any delay in press arrangements, the June number of the Journal will be published earlier than is usually the case, to ensure that every member of the Association shall receive the ballot paper in good time. There will therefore be no excuse for Members neglecting to avail themselves of their privileges. Voting is a personal duty which every member owes to the Association. Obviously, the more capable the Council, the better for the L.A.A. While on the subject of elections it may be well to draw attention to the new rule recently passed by the Council providing that "nominations for Council vacancies, *i.e.*, bye-elections, must reach the Honorary Secretary by the last post of the day preceding the day of election." The new rule also provides that "the election must be by ballot." The object of this rule is to ensure that only *Members* of the Association shall vote for Council nominees. *Inter alia* we may remark that such a thing as non-members of the Association voting has passed the bounds of probability and has actually occurred, hence the necessity of some measure preventing the abuse of what should be a jealously guarded privilege. It is appropriate, at this juncture, again to refer to the Annual Meeting, which it is expected will be held sometime in the third week of June, the exact date will be announced in the June issue of the Journal. This Meeting is exceptional, inasmuch as it is the first annual meeting of the L.A.A. to be held in the Provinces. We urge all who can to attend. Nottingham is a fine town, easily accessible, and special railway facilities will be afforded. We are assured of a hearty welcome. There will be a first-rate programme, and, almost more

important than all, there is the possibility of meeting our provincial colleagues. In every way the Annual Meeting promises to be memorable.

**Public Library Appointments and Personal Influence.—**

One of the most significant features of what we may justly call the renaissance of the public library movement, is to be found in the attention which the press now gives to matters of library activity. Recently we have directed attention to press comments on matters affecting the library world, and a recent number of *Truth* affords yet another example. In commenting on the appointment of a telegraphist to the position of sub-librarian in the Aberdeen Public Library, our contemporary remarks that "leaving the probability of the candidate having personal influence on the committee out of the question, expert candidates, of whom we understand there were about fifty, may well feel aggrieved at being passed over in favour of an inexperienced man." We agree. The pernicious system of "personal influence," even in cases where competition is purely confined to experts, should be condemned with all the accompanying paraphernalia of bell, book and candle. What particular form of condemnation, however, is applicable to the bolstering up of candidates for important public library appointments, who lack even an elementary knowledge of modern library economy, is a point on which we are quite unable to express ourselves. It is certain that on the staff of the Aberdeen Public Library there are assistants with some degree of professional training, with whom we sympathise in this fresh evidence of the tyranny of the "personal influence" evil. The protest lodged by the L.A.A. with the powers that be in Aberdeen, is in every way justified.

**The Easter School.—**The Third Annual Easter School in Holland was in every way an unqualified success, particularly as regards the social standpoint. About thirty members and friends of the L.A.A. took part in the visit, which was further blessed in having a calm voyage and beautiful weather. Our Holland friends vied with each other in making the visit a memorable one, and the amount of sight-seeing crammed into four short days was phenomenal. As a means of fostering a spirit of camaraderie, these international visits do incalculable good and add considerable prestige to the L.A.A. We understand that the financial side of the visit is not less successful, and there is the probability of a small surplus. It is early yet to pronounce an opinion as to the next Easter School, but there is a

possibility of London being selected as the venue. The possibilities contained in the suggestion at once present themselves, and the proposal, if carried out, would form a fitting climax to a series of international visits unique in the annals of the L.A.A.

## THE EASTER SCHOOL IN HOLLAND.

BY OLIVE E. CLARKE.

The audacity of those who conceived the idea that it would be possible to institute successfully a series of international visits of assistants during the Easter recess, has been more than justified. The Brussels School of 1911 roused enthusiasm in its members, who believed that no other School could ever equal it, and the ideas gained from the visits to the Institut Internationale de Bibliographie have not been wholly without fruit. Then in 1912 came Paris, and the chorus of praise swelled in volume, and everybody talked of Paris in superlatives, so much so, that when one comes to write of Holland—which was as superior to Paris in every way as Paris was to Brussels—it is difficult to find words wherewith to describe one's impressions. For, whereas in Brussels and Paris we were a knot of adventurers out to conquer unknown people, and to force our way into libraries which had never before admitted bodies of librarians into their precincts, we went to Holland as beloved and honoured guests; we went to meet those to whom we were knit by ties of personal friendship, by that spirit of camaraderie which accompanies membership of the L.A.A. And not only did we go to meet them but they, the librarians of Holland and those working for libraries in all capacities—working through the Dutch committee, which consisted of Miss Gebhard, Miss Mühlenfeld and Miss Snouck-Hurgronje, all of them members of our own Association—had been preparing to receive us in a manner which evidenced that our interest in the efforts of the band of devoted workers, who are striving to bring Dutch libraries into line with the noblest traditions of British libraries, is equalled by the warm feelings entertained by that same band of workers for their English colleagues.

The reception of the neat and minutely-compiled programme was the first shadowing forth of the endeavours made by the Dutch committee to shew us as many interesting things as possible during the Easter. The organisation was simply magnificent; all the things were

done which we set out to do, no trains were missed, there were no mishaps of any nature, and we exuded happiness as the hyacinths do sweet scents.

The School included twenty-eight members from the British Isles, together with one from Germany. Of librarians who went forth there were Messrs. F. E. Alexander (Warminster), F. H. Bath (Croydon), H. M. Cashmore (Birmingham), H. W. Checketts (Vice-President L.A.A.), H. Dixon (Croydon), T. E. Gay (Dublin), S. E. Harrison (Cirencester), F. W. T. Lange (St. Bride Institute, London), R. H. Loney (Stepney), E. Osborne (Bournemouth), D. Rhys Phillips (Swansea), W. C. B. Sayers (Hon. Sec. L.A.A.), H. A. Sharp (Croydon), W. H. Sunley (Leyton), N. Treliving (Hon. Sec. Yorkshire Branch), and Misses O. E. Clarke (Islington), L. Fairweather (Brighton), M. Gilbert (Fulham), E. Jansen (Berlin), and M. Kendal (Leeds). The friends who joined us were Misses A. Brooks (Merstham), K. and M. Gundelach (Norwood), E. Mayhew (Croydon), K. O'Leary (Kensington), H. Wilson (Leeds), and F. Powell (Birmingham).

With the exception of those who travelled from Leeds, the party left Fenchurch Street at the close of the afternoon of Thursday, March 20th; amongst those who arrived to bear the burdens of the party but not to journey across and partake of its pleasures, were the President, with his genial words of blessing; the Editor, full of business connected with "The Journal"; and our old friend Mr. Stewart. The departure was as hurried and as full of merriment as such departures are; and, despite the driving rain which beat upon the windows, our spirits were in no wise dampened. Moreover, as we passed through the fields of Essex a beautiful rainbow was seen stretching over the landscape; happy augury, which, with the mascots in the possession of various members, should charm away all evil happenings. Much was heard of the efficacy of a certain remedy, or rather preventative, for *mal-de-mer* during the journey; but judging from the shouts of laughter, and mocking questions and comments which followed its devoted purchaser's announcements, the majority preferred to let nature take her course; then again, interspersed with some very serious talk on the art of "getting on," one heard attempts at Dutch phrases; there was an examination of certain people as to their knowledge of Dutch coinage, and the usual reminiscences of the Paris party. At Tilbury we were taken by the tender to

a vessel lying alongside Gravesend. Soon we found ourselves jammed into a narrow passage down which we had to progress till we found the chief steward—the being who dispensed bunks; the first quarter of an hour on board always makes the chronicler feel her kinship with the proverbial woman-traveller who knows no rest till she has reduced her fellow-passengers to a state of nervous fury! But, quite suddenly, tranquillity reigned, and the “weaker members” discovered they were all met together in a cabin whose delights I dare not stay to unfold. Bunks were “bagged,” preparations were made for going on deck, and we finally found ourselves sitting down waiting for dinner! We waited, and we waited, and a murderous gleam came into the Hon. Sec.’s eye, and sounds of forcible speech were heard in the “saloon,” but eventually his portion arrived, though he had to share it with two others! At last we reached the deck and watched the silver gleam of the moon on the river, and the lights of Southend glide past; gradually, the party gathered in the bows, and a low murmur of conversation sprang up, and in fitful spasms strangers began to discover each other, and the spirit of comradeship spread his wings over all. Who shall tell of the innumerable “Nore Lightships” which were pointed out? Many were they; but too soon, the word went forth that the wise but uncertain sailor should seek his or her bunk. Thenceforward, nothing was certain save the comfort of a night at sea, and the sound of the pumps at intervals; one by one the seven stole down, till the light was extinguished, and we knew no more until a cry of “There is land ahead” made us open our eyes in sunlight and ring for “Tea!” Fortified by this beverage, those in the top bunks hauled out those in the lower ones—a task by no means as simple as it sounds!

Within a short while we were on deck with a glorious breeze coming down the river, watching the silver glint of the sun on the water, and a quite unfamiliar landscape whose flatness was redeemed from monotony by windmills, spires and avenues—long, straight avenues of tall, unbending trees with which it was studded; by the canals and waterways, and by the curious dwarf trees whose roots serve to bind together the banks of the canals. Moreover, there were shipbuilding yards innumerable from whence came forth an unceasing clang; and gradually the Maas began to swarm with quaint row-boats, with strings of barges which were being towed up the river by gallant little tugs, and several hay-barges attracted some attention. But at last

Rotterdam was reached, and there, on the quay were the Dutch Committee and Miss Jansen waiting to welcome us. We walked quickly to another quay, noting on the way an old lady with the pretty lace head-dress with which we were soon to become familiar, and boarded another boat which was to take us to Dordrecht. Then came more river scenery, and a breakfast the like of which was never seen before—Dutch rolls should have their glories sung in verse ! The approach to Dordrecht by river is one of the finest scenes in the Netherlands, and as the city with its ancient church came into view, there were fervent murmurs of appreciation, and cameras went briskly to work. From the boat Miss Snouck-Hurgronje led us by way of a beautiful old gateway to the hotel where our luggage was deposited, and a scramble for money and stamps took place. Then away, across a quaint swing-bridge, along the Nieuwe Haven, fringed with trees, full of boats, with the old house of seven heads at one end, and at the other the Church, into which we creep on tiptoe, for there is a Good Friday sermon in progress, and the strange tongue echoes impressively in the high, bare and bright interior. Dutch churches differ radically from those customary to Catholic countries where the tradition of the "dim, religious light" holds; there the churches have a similar atmosphere to hospital wards; they are bare, and height and light are prevailing characteristics. This church of Dordrecht, however, has some exquisitely carved choir-stalls and is a handsome Gothic edifice. From the church, the party visited many of the older parts of this picturesque city, with its quaint, old houses and Venetian-like canals; a hasty glance was all that could be spared for Ary Scheffer's pictures in the Museum; and then we reached the dignified building in which the Public Library is housed. A steep flight of stairs leads to the Lending Library—a long, bright room with tables, adorned with spring blossoms, down the centre for those who wish to use reference books or periodicals; and shelves from floor to ceiling round the walls. At right angles to this is another long, bright room, with yet more flowers and magazines; and at the end is displayed a collection of engravings illustrating the history of the city. In this room, a charming welcome was accorded us by the Burgomeister and several members of the Public Library Committee. A further inspection of the library followed; there are author and classified card catalogues, and the books are classified by a German scheme. Souvenirs of this visit in the form of picture postcards of the library, tiny histories (in English) of the institution and city were



presented to the visitors by the staff, which is composed entirely of women. The library is supported by small grants from the state and municipality, and is the property of a Society; admission to the library is obtained on payment of a subscription of not less than 10d. per annum, whilst children are admitted on payment of a purely nominal subscription. The staff consists of four assistants and one volunteer, who gives her services for a certain period in return for training, and there is an annual issue of 100,000 volumes. The inspection of the library was followed by lunch at the hotel, where the visitors were the guests of the Burgomeister and Committee, and so appreciative of the kindness which had prompted their reception were the strangers, that, at the close of the Hon. Secretary's toast, they rose to a man and burst into "For they are jolly good fellows" with a lustiness which surprised and delighted their hosts.

All too soon the special cars which had been chartered for us had to be entered, and the departure from Dordrecht was signalized by rousing cheers.

[*To be continued.*]

#### MODERN LIBRARY BOOKBINDING.\*

By HENRY T. COUTTS, *President*, LIBRARY ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION.

In dealing with the subject of modern library book-binding in the course of a single address, it is obviously impossible for me to enter fully into the technique of book-binding, and I must, therefore, act on the assumption that you already possess some knowledge of bookbinding generally.

Library binding differs from ordinary bookbinding only in certain details; the chief difference being that whereas books in the latter class may be bound fairly well with a view to an attractive finish, those in the former must be bound strongly to withstand the wear occasioned by constant and hard usage. In library binding strength and durability—unfortunately combined with pecuniary considerations—are of primary importance, and perfection of finish is a secondary consideration. It must not be inferred that library binding is necessarily ugly; a bookbinder who knows his trade thoroughly can produce a neat, inexpensive finish that appeals more strongly to the æsthetic sense than some of the so-called decorative bindings.

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\*Paper read before a Meeting of the Library Assistants' Association, at the Library Association Chambers, Bloomsbury Square, W.C., on Wednesday March 12th, 1913.

To ensure the maximum of strength and durability a book must possess the qualities of flexibility and solidity, and good materials must be used in the process of binding. Other necessities are suitability of style, general neatness, and cheapness, but such cheapness must be compatible with durability or it will cease to be true economy.

At the present day librarians and bookbinders are faced with the problem of the poorness of the paper which is used largely in the production of modern books. A few years ago, Mr. Chivers made a thorough examination of book papers, the results of which are given in a work entitled "The Paper of Lending Library Books, with some remarks on their Bindings." As Mr. Chivers points out, the quality of book papers has greatly deteriorated during the last twenty years. Generally speaking, the paper used in the production of books, prior to 1890, was of a sufficiently good quality to allow of books being sewn and resewn in the ordinary way. In many of the books published more recently the paper is so poor that it soon breaks away from the sewing thread, with the result that the book becomes a collection of single leaves and has to be discarded while the outer covering is in good condition.

From an examination of a large number of books withdrawn during the last few years from various public circulating libraries, I obtained the following results:—

Books published during the years		Average Issues		Total.
		In publ. covers.	After rebind.	
1881-1890	...	58	300	358
1891-1900	...	38	152	190
1901-1910	...	31	90	121

Of books published during the last decade the two worst examples were:—

- (a) A book, 8vo. size, printed on spongy featherweight paper known in the trade as antique. Published in 1909 at 3s. 6d.; discarded after circulating 20 times.
- (b) A book 4to size, printed on a heavy clay-surfaced paper. Published in 1903 at 16s.; discarded after 47 issues.

Having regard to the varying qualities of modern book-papers no rigid binding specification can be adhered to with satisfactory results. Twenty or thirty years ago it may have been possible to adopt a uniform binding for all ordinary books. Nowadays such a course would be almost impossible. Some books can be resewn in the ordinary way; others must be guarded at the back of the sections before

being sewn ; while others must be over-sewn. Books should be treated as units, and bound according to their particular needs, so that the life of the binding may approximate to the life of the book itself. Speaking as a bookbinder, Mr. Chivers says : " Books vary too much in tensile strength, in thicknesses of paper, in thicknesses of section, in loss of strength in folding and sewing, in brittle and in friable qualities to allow of binding to a specification." This is true in part, but a great deal depends upon the form in which the specification is drawn up. Given a conscientious bookbinder and a trustful library committee and librarian it would be quite easy to dispense with a formal specification, but such a combination is very rare. It is impossible, however, to dispense with a specification for library work, and the solution of the difficulty lies in the addition of a saving clause, similar to the following :—

In cases where the instructions are obviously inapplicable or undesirable, the binder is to submit alternative suggestions, with estimate of cost.

The majority of modern books, after circulating for some time in their original or publishers' covers, will be found to be broken in certain of the folds, and if they are to be re-sewn in the ordinary way, such sections must be guarded with linen or paper strips. In many binding contracts linen strips are specified, but it has been found that in the majority of instances linen is too thick and is not so satisfactory as tough thin paper. When a strip is pasted round the fold of a book, the strain is transferred from the back to the edge of the strip about a quarter inch from the fold. It will be seen that in books composed of feather-weight or clay-surfaced papers, the paper soon cracks and breaks away from the stiff edge of the linen strip. By substituting thin bank-paper this danger is obviated to a very large extent.

When books are so broken that the majority of the sections are in the form of single leaves, oversewing, or, as it is sometimes termed, overcasting, must be adopted. Notwithstanding various improvements in this method of sewing that have been made by modern bookbinders, it is not so good as sewing "all along" in the ordinary way. Oversewn books will seldom open flat, and, added to the want of flexibility, there is the difficulty of re-binding should it be necessary.

The advent of machine sewing has greatly facilitated bookbinding. In the past sewing by machinery has been

confined almost entirely to edition binding; sewing by hand being specified for library work. Certain of the modern machines, however, imitate hand sewing very closely, and, for ordinary work, are quite as effective. Although no sewing can be better than that carefully done by hand, reliable machine work is preferable to careless hand work. In these days when prices are cut so low, machine sewing might be allowed under approved conditions.

Before a book is sewn, single leaves, plates, &c., must be guarded in the manner before described. Folding plates and maps should be mounted on jaconet, but if a book contains a large number of these plates, the use of jaconet may give it a clumsy appearance, and it may be advisable to substitute bank-note paper. This paper is thin and tough and is well adapted for the purpose. The first and last sections of a book are naturally subjected to a greater strain than the others, and they should be strengthened by strips of thin tough paper, or fine linen, pasted at the outer folds. The hinges also should be strengthened by affixing a linen guard to each end-paper. One portion of the linen strip should be pasted along the edge of the folded end-paper, which is afterwards pasted down to the board, the other portion being folded round the adjoining end section and sewn through; the hinge being thus firmly attached to the book. Books may be bound with either "tight" or "hollow" backs. The "tight and flexible" back is obtained by attaching the leather used for covering directly to the book. This is the strongest and best form of binding for the average library book printed on a fairly good paper, as it affords a maximum amount of strength and flexibility; a hinge is formed wherever the book is opened, and the strain is distributed over the whole back. The disadvantages of the tight back are that after the book has been subjected to wear it is liable (especially in the case of thick and heavy books) to assume a more or less concave appearance, and to result in the gilt lettering on the back becoming somewhat indistinct owing to the creases caused by opening the book. A further objection to tight backs is that labels cannot be securely attached to them, but this objection is of little importance, as the tendency in modern library binding is to have the class or other mark impressed in gold and to dispense with the label altogether. A book with a "hollow" or "loose" back has the covering material attached at the joints and not fastened to the back itself. This places a greater strain on the joints when the book is opened, and, as it is customary to line the back of such books with mull and brown paper merely, there

is more likelihood of the sections breaking away. The principal advantage of the "hollow" back is that the shape and smoothness of the back is preserved. Books bound in cloth or buckram must necessarily have "hollow" backs on account of the stiff nature of the material. The advantages of the "tight" and "hollow" backs could be combined by leaving the back loose and substituting for the mull and brown paper a lining of thin leather, but as this would be more expensive it could only be adopted in special instances.

The French joint is generally used in library binding, because by means of this joint it is possible to use a thicker piece of leather for covering than in the case of the ordinary joint. A French joint is obtained by fixing the board about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch from the back of the book instead of bringing it up close to the back. When the book is covered a fold is thus formed on which the board hinges, and over which the creasing of the material, caused by the opening of the book, is distributed, instead of being confined to a single line.

Library books are invariably sewn on tapes; four being allowed for ordinary 8vo.'s; other sizes in proportion; the tapes being firmly secured between "split" boards. Usually the "split" board is not actually split, but is made by gluing together a thick and a thin board and leaving a split at one edge sufficiently large to receive the slips of tape. For cheaper work a substitute for a split board may be made by pasting a piece of strong paper over the mull and tapes before the end paper is pasted down.

Leathers should not be pared down unduly. Binders are often tempted to do this in order to obtain a neat finish. This is especially so with regard to corner pieces, and the inevitable result is that the corners of the boards soon cut through the leather. If the corners of the boards are rounded slightly they are less likely to wear through the covering material.

In regard to materials it is advisable to restrict both the variety and colours of coverings. All leathers that have been produced with the aid of sulphuric and other injurious acids should be tabooed, and a guarantee should be obtained from the binder that all skins used (1) are genuine as described; (2) are tanned with pure sumach or galls, or in the case of calf or sheep with oak bark, or mixtures of oak bark or sumach; (3) that no mineral acid has been used in the processes of tanning, bleaching and dyeing, and that the leather is free from injurious acids and other ingredients; and that no acid will be used to clear the leather in the process of binding. In the past the demand for variety and

evenness of colour had much to do with the production of perishable leathers.

A colour scheme is fascinating, but, like most things that fascinate, it has in it an element of danger. In the desire for beauty and variety of colouring, durability is often overlooked. The point that needs to be emphasized is that durability is the main factor in library bookbinding; beauty, brilliance, and evenness of colour are of minor importance.

Provided that the durability of the material is not affected, it is desirable to make use of a variety of colours for the covers of library books. Apart from the æsthetic aspect, there is the practical advantage of being able to differentiate between particular classes of books. This differentiation is useful in libraries systematically classified, especially in those conducted on the open access principle, as it distinguishes the various classes and constitutes a check whereby misplacements can be detected and corrected. It also facilitates the shelving of books by the staff, and this applies equally to libraries where the "closed" or barrier system is in operation. No colour scheme, however, is entirely satisfactory in these respects. The scheme may be perfect theoretically, but in practice it will be negated to some extent by the treatment that library books receive at the hands of readers—which is calculated to darken light bindings in a very short time—and by the contiguity, on the shelves, of books in their original or publishers' covers.

There is a diversity of opinion with regard to details in the arrangement of lettering. Most librarians and binders adhere to the orthodox way of putting the title first (generally in the second panel), the author's name in the centre, and the location or class number in a lower panel at a uniform distance from the bottom. Others, thinking to aid quick reference to books, put the class number at the top of the book, the author's name next, and the title in the centre panel, followed by any additional lettering that may be necessary. Doctors will disagree (especially when it is a question of panels) and it would be useless to attempt to lay down hard and fast rules for general adoption in a matter of this nature; but every library authority should endeavour in its own system to secure uniformity in lettering and other details of bookbinding.

Having thus briefly sketched the principles of library bookbinding I would ask you to apply them to modern books. I have already stated that the life of the binding should approximate to the life of the book itself. In order to make the best use of the limited funds available for binding, it is

necessary not only to bind a book well, but to avoid binding it too well. Before deciding on a style of binding for a particular book there are several factors which must be taken into account. These factors are given in the "Manual of Library Bookbinding" (see section 40, etc.), and therefore it is unnecessary to repeat them here. A good cloth or art linen is quite serviceable enough for the average type of modern novel and other books printed on light, fluffy or "featherweight" paper. In certain instances it is a true Hibernianism to say that the best method of rebinding books is not to rebind, but to discard them. It is sometimes more economical to replace a book than to rebind it.

A consideration of the aforementioned factors, reveal disadvantages in having books bound directly from the publishers' sheets. In some cases it would be advisable to adopt this method, but in the majority of cases it would be inadvisable. There are comparatively few books published the popularity and lasting qualities of which can be so estimated as to justify the expense of a durable library binding, when a less expensive binding would survive the book itself. In addition, very few publishers will supply books in sheets, and the book has to be taken down and rebound. The more economical method is to circulate books for a time in their original or publishers' covers, and to have them rebound directly they show signs of becoming worn at the folds.

Reinforced library bindings are a recent innovation on the part of some of the more progressive publishers. This is a step in the right direction, and it is to be hoped that librarians will encourage this work by buying books in reinforced bindings whenever possible. In 1910 Messrs. Thomas Nelson & Sons issued some of their books in reinforced bindings, but discontinued the practice owing to the small demand made for them. Mr. Henry Frowde and Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton combined for the purpose of issuing a number of children's books in special library bindings. The specification of the several bindings is as follows:—

Style 1: Quarter pigskin, cloth sides. Style 2: Quarter pigskin, Bancroft cloth sides. Style 3: Quarter morocco, cloth sides. Style 4: Quarter morocco, Bancroft cloth sides. Style 5: Bancroft cloth. Style 6: Imperial morocco cloth.

A book published at 5s. costs 4s. 2d. when bound in quarter pigskin or morocco, and 3s. 11s. in cloth; a book



published at 3s. 6s. costs 3s. 3d. in quarter pigskin or morocco, and 3s. in cloth. Everyman's Library series, published by Messrs. J. M. Dent & Sons, is issued in a special quarter pigskin binding at 2s. net., and in a linen-faced cloth edition at 1s. 6d. net. Both editions are very serviceable, but the former is the more suitable for Public Library use. The specification is as follows:—

*"The books are sewn on strong linen tapes, which are attached to the boards. A special glue has been made to keep the books thoroughly flexible. The end papers are lined with a cotton fabric, and they are passed round the first two and the last two sections of the book, so that it is impossible for them to break away. The covers are mill board (not straw board). The cloth is linen-faced cloth, specially prepared to resist both dirt and wear, and the thirteen sections of the library are bound in thirteen different colours, so that they may be easily discernible. The lettering is clear and distinct without ornament."*

Messrs. The H. R. Hunting Co., Mass., have undertaken the work of binding and distributing books, issued by the various American publishers, in strong bindings suitable for libraries. The first and last sections are reinforced with muslin, and cloth strips are placed at the joints, pasted on fly leaf and sewn through. Where the paper is flexible the binding will in most cases outwear the cover. Where thick spongy, or heavy calendered paper is used the reinforced binding will add to its durability, but is not guaranteed.

Publishers' reinforced bindings are as yet but an experiment, and it remains to be seen what their bearing will be in relation to library bookbinding generally.

## PROCEEDINGS.

### APRIL GENERAL MEETING.

The April Meeting of the Eighteenth Session was held on Wednesday, 9th April, 1913, at the Southwark Central Public Library, Walworth Road, S.E., at 7.30 p.m.

The visitors, numbering about 40, were received by the Chief Librarian, Mr. R. W. Mould, who conducted the members through the Library, and the valuable general collection known as the Cuming Museum. After the inspection, the visitors partook of tea, at the invitation of Mr. Mould, who had provided this welcome and additional item to the evening's proceedings. The meeting subsequently held was presided over by Mr. Mould, who extended a cordial welcome to the Association, and apologized for the non-attendance of the Chairman of the Library Committee, who should have presided, but was prevented from doing so by urgent business.



In the course of a very interesting speech Mr. MOULD eulogised the work of the Association; marked his keen sense of appreciation for the work it had done and is still doing for the profession amongst assistants, and paid a tribute to the excellence of *The Library Assistant* as a publication. He believed the day would soon come when the untrained man would have little chance of remaining in the profession. At one time the man who possessed one Certificate of the L.A. was the exception rather than the rule, but to-day it was the other way about, and the possession of the Diploma was the distinguishing feature. Very shortly, he believed, the Diploma would be in the hands of the many rather than the few, and it therefore behoved every assistant to make sure that he was well on the way to securing it. The L.A.A. was doing excellent work in connection with the training of assistants. Mr. Mould concluded his inspiring address with an exhortation to assistants to press forward and always be educationally in advance of their time.

The Chairman then called upon Mr. W. G. HAWKINS (Fulham) to read his paper on "Some Points in the Upkeep of Library Buildings," which was followed by a paper by Mr. H. G. STEELE (Leyton) entitled "Practical Lighting Problems."

The PRESIDENT, in opening the discussion on both papers, said that the utility of the library was often sacrificed to the exterior decoration and to the fads and fancies of architects. The objection to natural lighting from the roof was that in the summer the building often became uncomfortably hot, although sun-blinds could be fitted to mitigate this evil. With regard to artificial lighting, a combination of direct and local lighting was most serviceable, with local lighting predominating in the reference library. Mr. F. E. SANDRY (Canning Town) advocated teak blocks as the most durable form of flooring. He suggested the more general use of "Holophane" shades, which, although expensive at the outset, were economical in the end. Mr. W. S. C. RAE (Fulham) suggested that more attention should be paid to the choosing of colours for wall paints, and pointed out that cream colours gave the best chance for reflected light. He thought that cork carpet was not so durable as linoleum. He agreed that a combination of point and local lighting was most useful, and said that since the introduction of the filament lamp, transformers from a high voltage to a lower were hardly necessary. At Fulham the "Holophane" shades had been tried with complete satisfaction. Miss GILBERT (Fulham) said that the lighting of book cases from the floor had been tried at Fulham, but it was found that as people stood in the gangways between the cases, they obstructed the light from the floor in which the lamps were encased. Mr. J. F. HOGG (Battersea) thought that the question of ventilation could be more effectively dealt with by architects. Lighting by electroliers was an inadequate form of lighting, and he favoured point lighting. Mr. W. R. BRIDGE (Battersea) advocated the more frequent renewal of lamps rather than allow them to waste current. Mr. H. G. HAYNE (Stroud Green) claimed that many of the badly planned library buildings were the result of local surveyors having the plans to execute rather than competent architects. Cream coloured enamel gave the best result as far as reflected light was concerned. Mr. G. SILVER (Isleworth) suggested that libraries should adopt the system by which as soon as a reader sat in a chair the light was switched on automatically, the switch being attached to the seat. The HONORARY SECRETARY agreed with the latter speaker and pointed out that the type of chair mentioned was already in use on various steamers. The idea was carried out, too, in the Library of the Royal Society of Medicine. With reference to the floor lighting of book cases, Mr. Jast had suggested that the light should be placed in the plinth of the cases and not in the floor, as suggested by previous speakers, thus the light would not be covered as people walked about the gangways. Maple-wood floors were by

far the best, while indirect lighting was the most suitable form of lighting; the best results are secured where the walls are painted with cream enamel, coloured blush rose pink. A vote of thanks to the readers of papers was moved by the HON. EDITOR, who said that wherever possible a library should be built having all the departments on one floor. This was much more economical in every way. He suggested that bookcases should be graduated so as to allow more light to reach the bottom shelves. Mr. G. R. BOLTON (Stoke Newington), in seconding the resolution, emphasised the importance of fixing as many switches as possible. The more numerous the switches the less would be the cost of current consumed. Messrs. Hawkins and Steele having replied, the PRESIDENT moved and Mr. W. B. THORNE (Poplar) seconded a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman for presiding, and for the refreshments so kindly provided by him; and also to the Libraries Committee for permission to meet at the Library. Mr. MOULD replied in a very happy speech, and contributed some very useful data *apropos* of the subjects raised in each of the papers.

The HON. SECRETARY'S announcements concluded a most interesting evening.

#### NORTH EASTERN BRANCH.

A very successful meeting of the North Eastern Branch was held at Sunderland, on Wednesday, March 19th. The members met in the Central Public Library, where they were welcomed by the chief librarian, Mr. J. A. CHARLTON DEAS. The members were then conducted through the Art Gallery where there was on exhibition a collection of modern paintings by famous artists, selected on loan from the principal art galleries of Great Britain. The members were divided into convenient groups, each party being attended by one of the members of the staff, who explained interesting features of the pictures. A special car then conveyed the company down to the sea, where a delightful hour was spent by the beach and cliffs. On returning to the town the members were entertained to tea by the Chief Librarian, after which they proceeded to the inspection of the Central Library. At the evening session Mr. J. WALTON, Sub-Librarian, Newcastle Public Libraries, delivered an intensely interesting paper on "The Evolution of Writing and of the Printed Book." He traced the development of our alphabet from the picture writing of the ancient Egyptians, and spoke of the influence Northumbrian writing—of which the Lindisfarne Gospels were an example—had had in the formation of the letter or character now known as the Caroline Minuscule, which was evolved by the Northumbrian scholar, Alcuin, then in Charlemagne's service, but formerly Dean of York. Mr. Walton explained also that the Caroline Minuscule employed in the writing of the manuscripts written for Charlemagne under Alcuin's direction formed the basis of the types employed in the printing of our books and newspapers to-day. He dealt at length with the controversy as to whom was due the invention of printing, and gave some interesting facts relating to Gutenberg and his rival Coster. The lecture was illustrated by means of lantern slides, some of which had been specially prepared. By means of these slides those present were enabled to appreciate the glory and beauty of the early manuscripts. The slides relating to the Lindisfarne Gospels, and those showing the intricacy of the design employed in Irish illuminating were particularly fine.

The following Officers and Committee were elected for the year 1913-1914:—CHAIRMAN, Mr. W. H. Gibson (Newcastle); VICE-CHAIRMAN, Mr. H. Postall (Sunderland); TREASURER, Mr. I. Briggs (Newcastle); SECRETARY, Mr. R. M. Daniel (South Shields). COMMITTEE:—Members, Mr. J. Walton, (Newcastle), Mr. D. W. Herdman (Sunderland), Mr. T. E.

Turnbull (Newcastle), Miss Brookes (Sunderland); Associates: Mr. A. E. Thompson and Mr. W. Smettem (Newcastle), Miss Coatesworth (Sunderland), Mr. A. T. Ord (South Shields).

During the meeting the members extended their congratulations to Mr. W. Howe, who had been appointed to a position in the Birmingham Public Libraries.

The attention of North-Eastern Branch associates is drawn to the announcement which appears on another page.

## MIDLAND BRANCH.

### ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR 1912.

The Committee have pleasure in presenting the following Report on the work of the Branch during the year ending December 31st, 1912.

On that date the total membership of the Branch was 36, consisting of 2 fellows, 20 members and 14 associates, as against a total membership of 29 on December 31st, 1911. During the year one member and one associate resigned in consequence of promotion to libraries outside the Midlands, and one member and one associate left the library profession.

The following meetings have been held: 31st January, 1912. Second Annual Meeting at Woodbrooke Settlement, Selly Oak, Birmingham. Addresses: "Librarians as Social Observers and Educators," by H. G. Wood, M.A.; "Residual Errors in Great English Authors," by Dr. J. Rendel Harris. Inspection of the Settlement and dinner with its members.

23rd May, 1912. Annual Open Meeting at Worcester. Art Gallery, Natural History Museum, Cathedral and Public Library. River trip in the evening.

18th September, 1912. At Birmingham. Papers: "The Abolition of Fiction from the Lending Library," by Mr. Duncan Gray; "Some Features of Work in a College Library," by Mr. E. A. Peppiette. Visit to the printing and bookbinding works of Messrs. Buckler & Webb.

28th November, 1912. At Lichfield. Address: "Dr. Johnson's Dictionary," by Mr. Councillor W. A. Wood. Cathedral, Museum and Library, and Johnson House visited.

With the exception of the Worcester Meeting, all were well attended and greatly appreciated by those present. The Woodbrooke Meeting was particularly successful; the attendance on that occasion being a record one.

While heartily congratulating him the Committee much regret to have lost the services of Mr. W. Ewart Owen as Honorary Secretary, owing to his appointment to the librarianship of Leamington. Mr. Owen's energy and enthusiasm have been mainly responsible for the success which the Branch has so far achieved, and the Committee take this opportunity of expressing their high appreciation of the excellent service rendered by him.

Two other active members have been lost to the Branch for a like reason; Mr. E. A. Peppiette, appointed to Liverpool University Library, and Mr. W. Pollitt, who has gone to Leeds, and the Committee heartily congratulate them. Another very gratifying event was the award of the Potter-Briscoe Prize of 1911-12, to Mr. H. Grindle for his paper on "The Fiction Question."

During the early part of the year the Birmingham and District Library Association organised preparatory classes for the Library Association's examinations in Classification, Library History, and Library Routine, and a third series in Classification, Cataloguing and Library Routine was commenced in November last. The Committee again wish to express their hearty appreciation of the District Association's action in the matter.

For assistance kindly given in various ways the Committee offer, on behalf of the Branch, their warmest thanks to the following:—Rev. E. Bradley, Messrs. Buckler & Webb, Mr. Thomas Duckworth, Councillor Harradine, Mr. A. D. Parker, Mr. Walter Powell, Rev. Canon Wilson, and Councillors H. J. C. Winterton and W. A. Wood.

In conclusion, the Committee feel that the past year, in spite of several difficulties which were encountered, has been a successful one, and look forward to an increase in the prosperity and usefulness of the Branch in the future.

#### Statement of Receipts and Expenditure, 1912.

RECEIPTS.				PAYMENTS.			
	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
By Subscriptions (members)	4	15	0	To Deficit as per Balance-sheet, 1911 ...	1	3	3
„ „ (associates)	2	0	0	„ Proportion of Subscriptions due to Central...	4	18	6
„ Donation (anonymous)	0	5	0	„ Postage and General Expenses per Hon. Secretary ...	1	2	8
„ Sundries ...	0	2	6	„ Postage, &c., per Hon. Treasurer ...	0	6	6
„ Deficit ...	0	8	5				
	<u>£7</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>		<u>£7</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>

February 17th, 1913.

Audited and found correct,  
G. L. BURTON, *Hon. Auditor.*

#### NEW MEMBERS.

**Fellow:** S. E. Harrison, Bingham Public Library, Cirencester.

**Associates:** J. Fielding, Bolton; L. F. Steed, Heston-Isleworth.

**Midland Branch: Members:** F. S. Price, Walsall; D. E. Parker, Birmingham. **Associates:** Miss Olive Richardson, Coventry; J. C. Saunders, Stirchley, Birmingham.

**Yorkshire Branch. Members:** A. E. Sleight, Hull; Miss A. Towler, Bradford; The Misses E. G. Taylor, E. Fretwell, A. Rhodes, and D. Nicholson, all of Leeds. **Associates:** The Misses L. Denison, M. Kendall, M. Sutcliffe, B. T. Wilkinson, S. C. Whitley, all of Leeds.

#### APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES.

AVERY, A. J., of the Bolton Public Libraries, to be Assistant in the Birmingham Public Libraries.

\*HILDEBRANDT, MISS MARIE, of The Hague Public Library (Student Assistant, Croydon Public Libraries) to be Librarian, Public Library. Bussum, Holland.

\*HOWE, WILLIAM W., of the Sunderland Public Libraries, has been appointed an assistant in the Birmingham Public Libraries.

MEAKIN, F. M., of the Bootle Public Library, has been appointed an assistant in the Tottenham Public Libraries and Museum.

\*RILEY, T., of the Lancaster Public Library, has been appointed an assistant in the Central Public Library, Birmingham.

\*SAWNEY, THOMAS E., of the Central Library, has been appointed Librarian-in-charge of the new branch Library, Hedon Road, Hull.

\*SPENCER, CHARLES, of the Hither Green Branch Library, Lewisham, has been appointed Senior Assistant.

\*Member, L.A.A.







**LIBRARY ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION THIRD INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, UTRECHT, EASTER, 1913.**

*Standing in Doorway* (left to right): W. H. Sanley (Leighton); B. J. Frost (East Ham); Miss M. Hildebrandt (Bussum); S. E. Harrison (Clarenceker); T. E. Alexander (Warrminster).

*Standing* (left to right): F. Haynes-Bath (Croydon); H. A. Sharp (Croydon); Miss E. M. Mayhew; T. E. Gay (Dublin); Miss A. I. Brooks; Miss E. Jansen (Hamburg); F. Powell; Miss M. Kendall (Leeds); F. W. T. Langle (St. Bride Institute); H. M. Cushman (Birmingham); Miss L. Fairweather (Brighton); E. Osborne (Bourne-mouth); Miss Olive E. Charlie (Islington); Norman Treiving (Leeds); Miss H. Wilson; D. Rhys Phillips (Swansea); Miss E. de Clerq (Utrecht); Miss Pleyte (The Hague); Miss D. de Wijs (Middelburg); Miss K. O'Leary; S. H. Loney (St. Albans); T. Gilbert (The Hague).

*On Chairs*: Miss A. G. O'Brien (Hampstead); O. Mithelfeld (Hilversum); H. W. Chackels (Birmingham, *Vice-President*); Miss N. Snouck-Hurgronje (Dordrecht); W. C. Berwick Staves (Croydon, *Hon. Secretary*); Miss A. C. Gebhard (Amsterdam); Dr. A. C. Steenbergen (Amsterdam).

*In Front on Ground*: Miss M. Gundelach; H. Dixon (Croydon); Miss K. Gundelach.